AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listing, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (previously presented) A drum comprising a fixed cylindrical body with a perforated lateral surface surrounded by a holed roll driven in rotation relative to the axis of the cylindrical body, and means for creating a partial vacuum inside the body, characterized by a water-impermeable partition subdividing the interior of the body into first and second compartments delimited by the partition and respectively by a first and a second portion of the lateral surface, and both the first and second compartments being placed under partial vacuum by the means for creating a partial vacuum.

2. (previously presented) The drum as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the drum is associated with a conveyor tangential to the drum at a point of contact and the first compartment begins opposite the point of contact and ends opposite a point of the lateral surface downstream, in the direction of rotation of the holed roll, of the point of contact.

3. (previously presented) The drum as claimed in claim 2, characterized in that the first compartment extends over a sector of the body.

4. (previously presented) The drum as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the means for creating a partial vacuum include a vacuum means associated with each compartment for creating a partial vacuum in the associated compartment.

5. (previously presented) The drum as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the ratio of the total area of the perforations, per unit of surface, to the area of the lateral surface on which they lie is greater for the first compartment than for the second compartment.

6. (previously presented) The drum as claimed in claim 1, characterized by a pressurized water injector on the portion of the roll which passes opposite the portion of the lateral surface of the second compartment.

7. (previously presented) The drum as claimed in claim 6, characterized in that the water injector is

disposed angularly in a manner immediately adjacent to the first compartment.

8. (previously presented) A production unit for a nonwoven material, comprising a spunbond tower with a conveyor leading to a drum, characterized in that the drum is as defined in claim 1.

9. (previously presented) The production unit as claimed in claim 8, characterized in that the conveyor is tangential to the drum.

10. (currently amended) The production unit as claimed in claim 8, characterized in that the drum is mounted directly downstream of the tower without interposition of a device causing ~~the~~ drawing of the material.

11. (currently amended) A method of producing a nonwoven material, comprising the steps of: providing the production unit as claimed in claim 8, operating the ~~spun~~ spunbond tower to deposit filaments onto the conveyor for conveyance at a conveyor linear speed to a lateral surface of the drum, rotating the drum at a drum lateral surface linear speed to receive the deposited filaments

and maintaining the conveyor linear speed at a value greater than the drum lateral surface linear speed.

Claims 12 through 22 (cancelled).